

[Slide change.]

This is Ari Fleischer, of course. I was chewing him out here. [Laughter] I'm saying, "Ari, I am sick and tired of you not fully answering all the wonderful questions asked by our hardworking White House press corps. Are you sure, Ari, we're not leaking enough?" [Laughter] "Are you sure that we've given them enough access to me? I've got an idea, I'll do more interviews—with 'Baseball Tonight.'" [Laughter]

Now, part of the job of a President is to meet with representatives of special interest groups.

[Slide change.] [Laughter]

Here I am meeting with representatives from the American Cloning Council. [Laughter]

[Slide change.]

I try to work with Republicans and Democrats alike. For political reasons, some Democrats prefer that it not be known they are working with a Republican President, so they slip in the back door—like Hillary Clinton here.

[Slide change.] [Laughter]

It's not all work, of course. One day, I decided to show some of the staff the White House bowling alley. Boys and girls, there is a reason you wear those special bowling shoes.

[Three slide changes.] [Laughter]

Of course, another job of the President is dealing with the White House press corps. You ask some pretty tough questions, but to tell you the truth, I don't think you've laid a glove on me.

Here I am after our last press conference.

[Slide change.] [Laughter]

In closing tonight, I thought about turning serious and talking about all we've been through since I was here last year. But then I decided this wasn't the time or the place. You came to have a good time; we've got Drew Carey waiting to entertain us.

So instead, I'm going to leave you with one last thought and one last photo of our dog Spot.

[Slide change.]

I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, is this a great country or what? [Laughter]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Holland, outgoing president, White House Correspondents' Association, who introduced the President. He also referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Remarks at Opening Day of 2002 White House Tee-Ball

May 5, 2002

Well, Shalim, thank you very much for singing the national anthem. Welcome to baseball at the White House. We're glad you all are here.

I want to thank the commissioner of tee-ball at the White House this year, one of the alltime great baseball players, one of the alltime great men, Mr. Cal Ripken.

I want to—I want to welcome the teams that are going to play today on the opening day of the 2002 season. The Uniondale Little League Sluggers and all their moms and dads and the coaches—thank you all very much. And as well, we want to thank the 6 and 11 Little League Sluggers from Trenton, New Jersey. And I want to thank your moms and dads for coming too. Welcome.

We've also got some really fine former baseball players with us—Tony Perez, Mr. Hall of Fame. As well, we've got "Cha Cha" Orlando Cepeda.

I want to thank the other coach on the field, a member of my Cabinet, *Señor* Mel Martinez.

Erubiel Durazo, from the world champion Arizona Diamondbacks, is with us today as well. Erubiel, *mucho gusto*.

As well, there's a great new movie out called "The Rookie." He is—this guy's a Texan. He's a great story. I hope you go see the movie. But the man who Dennis Quaid plays in the movie is with us today, the actual baseball player, Jim Morris. Thank you for coming, Jim.

As well, a former Texas Ranger, Billy Ripken—where are you, Billy? Hi, Billy.

I do want to thank our announcers, Ron Eisen and Alvaro Martin, for being here with us. Thank you guys very much for coming.

This guy doesn't play baseball, but he is a Washington Redskins star, "Big Daddy" Wilkinson. Thank you for coming. Welcome.

And now, before we begin, I'd like for the players to join me in reciting the Little League pledge. Are you ready?

"I trust in God. I love my country and will respect its laws. I will play fair and strive to win. But win or lose, I will always do my best."

Are you ready?

And now, it is my honor to put the first ball on the tee to kick off tee-ball at the White House.

[The President placed the ball on the tee.]

Play ball!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:27 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainer Shalim; ESPN announcers Rich Eisen and Alvaro Martin; and Dan "Big Daddy" Wilkinson, defensive tackle, Washington Redskins.

Proclamation 7555—Small Business Week, 2002

May 3, 2002

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The strength of our economy is built on the creativity and entrepreneurship of our people. Those who own and operate our Nation's 25 million small businesses make a vital contribution to our prosperity through their ongoing work to create new technologies, products, and services. These hardworking men and women and their employees define the American spirit through their innovation, dedication, and determination.

The tragedy of September 11, 2001, greatly affected our Nation and our economy; but our economy is recovering and remains fundamentally sound. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, the business community rose to this challenge by volunteering their time and services to help with the relief and

rebuilding efforts in New York City and Washington, D.C. This compassionate spirit demonstrated America's true character.

To help businesses recover from September 11, my Administration has made more than \$520 million in disaster loans available to business owners nationwide. I also remain committed to a domestic policy that stimulates economic growth, boosts consumer purchasing power, and creates a level playing field. Our efforts to lower taxes, enact reasonable regulations, and reduce tariffs and other barriers to free trade will increase the competitive position of our small businesses. To further encourage economic growth, I recently signed into law the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002. The Act helps to create more jobs across our country by providing tax incentives for companies to expand and create jobs by investing in facilities and equipment. This action will lead to more opportunities in manufacturing, high-tech sectors, and our small businesses. I am also committed to achieve a permanent repeal of the death tax and the permanent extension of tax relief to help ensure the strength and survival of small businesses.

America's small business owners represent more than 99 percent of all employers and their businesses employ more than half of the private work force. These entrepreneurs who create more than 66 percent of the new jobs nationwide and generate more than 50 percent of the Nation's gross domestic product growth are critical to our country's prosperity and the well-being of our communities. We salute these employers by celebrating Small Business Week and recognizing their contributions to all Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 5 through May 11, 2002, as Small Business Week. I call on all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that celebrate the achievements of small business owners and encourage and foster the development of new enterprises.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the